



SAFETY FIRST

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With the cost of owning and keeping a performance horse it is vital that owners have the required information to make informed decisions.

Its commonly understood that it is important to feed a product designed specifically for horses. However, what is not often realised is that not all manufacturing processes are created equal, and not all manufacturers take the same measures to ensure feed safety.

Owners need to know that their horses' feed is made from good quality, safe ingredients whilst those riding at a competitive level need to know it is free from banned substances, especially if they compete under Jockey Club or FEI rules.

For many years Epol have had many systems in place to ensure the quality and safety of horse products throughout the mills. Epol is a fully registered AFMA member and was also the first feed manufacturer to receive ISO 22000 Certification. We also fully uphold the values of Act 36.

At Epol we uphold these standards to ensure that not only are they suitable for sale within in South Africa but that we also are compliant with international export certification. To ensure the codes of conduct are upheld across all these organisations we submit to a yearly auditing process as well as a quarterly visit from the state vet giving users of our products peace of mind.

So how does this relate to the full manufacturing of our horse feeds?

To reduce the risk of contamination we have removed all specific banned substances from our horse feed plant, to ensure that our safety is upheld.



However as we cannot guarantee this for all our suppliers we ensure that we test routinely for such substances in case they have entered our mill via other channels. We also include further regular testing for mixture quality, Microtoxins, heavy metals, pesticides and the quality of our fats and oils to ensure stability.

From the moment raw materials enter our plant we sample each delivery before offloading. This is done by Near-Infrared Spectroscopy (NIR). What this enables us to see is that each raw material meets the nutritional specifications that we indicated on purchase.

If nutritional standards are not met then we reject the delivery, ensuring each time our raw materials are of the same standard. All our raw materials are fully traceable and sourced from mainly local suppliers when possible.

1. Once these raw materials have been accepted large bulk items (such as sunflower, maize, bran and soya) are stored within our bulk bins. These bins are checked hourly to ensure compliance of storage.
2. Once we are satisfied with this we move onto the manufacturing process. Smaller stored raw materials such as Lucerne and vitamin and mineral premixes are captured per batch via our Tipping sheets. These ensure that these items are set out in the correct quantities per product and are signed off by management to ensure you receive the same levels within each product made every time.
3. All the raw materials are then brought together into our milling machines via computer systems to ensure that our formulations are upheld. It also allows us to check that the formulations are kept with set bounds and can not therefore contain different ingredients accidentally.
4. During manufacturing multiple batches are produced.
 - The first batch produced is sampled and taken off for NIR testing. If this test confirms that the product is meeting all specifications then the subsequent batches are produced.
 - The following batches are made and then tested for visual look.
 - A composition from all batches is made and then re mixed.
 - We then re test via NIR and the durability of pellets is assessed.
5. Once the tests have confirmed the specifications of the final product are met the batch will be signed off and the product is released for distribution/sale.
6. A sample from each batch is kept and archived to ensure that should we need to we can trace back any batch produced.

Therefore it's vital to keep hold of your label in case you need to contact us as it provides you with all the information needed such as batch and manufacture date.

Within our products we also include mould inhibitors and mycotoxin binders to further enhance our service. These products have no known impact on equine health and we select options that are certified safe for the use in horse feed.

What these exceptional extras do is help to give the user peace of mind that even if storage and transportation guidelines our not upheld by retailers that the products can still be safely used and arrive free of issues such a mould and toxins.

How do you review GMOs?

At Epol we ensure 100% compliance with all legislation applicable to the animal feed industry, including all applicable GMO regulations. We keep abreast and study thoroughly the latest developments and scientific research on the effect of GMO's on the health and performance of equines.

However, in South Africa it is extremely difficult to ensure that all ingredients are GM free as the prevention of cross contamination between GMO and non GMO raw materials (eg. Maize and soya) is not actively encouraged by legislation and government and therefore are not always pursued by the grain and raw material handling industry.

Our clients can rest assured, however, that should any research show the possibility of adverse effects in equines, we would take immediate action against the inclusion of GM ingredients in our feeds.

Foreign objects

At our horse mills we do have policies in place for the checking of foreign objects within our bagging lines to try and minimise the occurrence of such issues. However this is a big task, especially in ingredients such as hays used as not all farmers ensure their fields are free of objects at all times.

At every junction we aim to reduce the incidence of objects found within our feeds and continually monitor and review our policies to reduce levels. All manufacturers in South Africa are plagued by this issue but you can be assured that action is always taken when issues are reported.

Conclusion

As the first feed manufacturer to receive ISO 22000 Certification, Epol sets World Standards to ensure safe food supply chains internationally. The use of Near-Infrared Spectroscopy (NIR) allows us to analyse raw materials, in processed products, as well as finished products.

This facilitates stringent controls of incoming raw materials and ingredients to maximise quality and to assist in achieving a strict consistency in all our finished products.

On-going research and development ensure that our products remain at the forefront of feed technology, giving owners economical input costs with maximum yield.

With a committed team of expert nutritionists and highly motivated staff, who continually strive for excellence, our equine range is able to cater for a wide variety of needs.

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to Jan Kleynhans and Callaho Con Quito on your win at the 2019 Puresan Stokkiesdraai Cup, in the 1.35m A2 Competition.

We are proud to work so closely with you and your wonderful string of horses.

Congratulations and good luck for the South African Derby.

Good Luck to all those competing in the South African Derby this week. We wish you all the very best of luck. Equus and Epol are proud sponsors at this event.





SOUTH AFRICAN DERBY '19

2 – 6 October 2019

Get your tickets at www.TicketGenie.co.za

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For an absolutely free consultation with no further obligation contact our professional consultants to schedule a visit to your yard.

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